

17 September 1984

Dear Mom and Dad,

Mary called yesterday afternoon so I got to speak with her as well as you. Her trip to San Francisco should be a good break. I still love that area; there are many places to visit and sights to see.

We hadn't been on a two week vacation for quite a while. I was a little worried I would tire of hotels and eating out, but our pace was moderate (for us) and the trip turned out to be thoroughly enjoyable. The weather should have been better but it didn't stop us from doing anything or detract from our enjoyment.

We landed at Stansted Airport, about 40 miles from London, early on Saturday the 1st. This airport is inconvenient, but a common destination for charters which wish to avoid the high landing fees at Heathrow. After an endless bus ride we finally got to our usual hotel, the London Elizabeth, on Bayswater Road across from Hyde Park and only a few blocks from our old apartment. It is a very simple hotel, but perfectly located for us and we are now good friends with the manager. After the essential two hours nap we walked downtown to Soho, had our pints of "bitter" in a pub and ate in a small Italian restaurant. The pasta served to carbohydrate load us for the next day's run but we also had a fish course.

On Sunday morning we got underway at 7 AM for our 20 mile run through 6 parks on both sides of the river. The route was familiar and is ~~carefully~~ designed to pass by water fountains and WCs. After a bath and quick snack of apple and brownie, we took the tube to Tower Hill and ate lunch at the Dickens Inn which is located in the restored St. Katherine's Dock area near the Thames. Afterward we walked a considerable distance to the British Museum where we took in a special exhibit, the Treasury of San Marco, from Venice. Later we sought out a recommended pub, the Sun, where we consumed some 'real ale' that supposedly is much better than standard beer. Finally, we had dinner at a Thai restaurant, again in Soho.

On Monday morning we flew to Vienna. I rented a car at the airport and we drove to Salzburg along a southerly route. The going was slow because

of highway work. The day was very warm and as we climbed up into the mountains the thunderclouds began to gather. Just before the storm hit we pulled into a service area and headed for the snack bar. An attendant, however, ran over and told me that hail would destroy the car and to park it under cover. Some hail did accompany the downpour but it was over by the time we finished our beers and we continued on to Salzburg stopping for dinner at another service area. We both had gulaschsuppe which is beef stew. It was tasty but rather salty. Arriving in Salzburg we checked at several hotels but they were full and we ended up staying at the Sheraton which was more expensive than we wanted but turned out to be just fine. The hotel is very near the river and features a ~~breakfast buffet~~ that we took full advantage of. Many kinds of fresh and canned fruits, cereals, rolls, jams, yogurt, cheese, wursts, and other items were available.

Salzburg is an ancient city with a well-preserved castle and is beautifully located on a rushing river, the Salzach. On Tuesday we toured the town visiting the Mozart family house (now a museum), the castle, and the baroque churches. In the afternoon we drove a half hour from town and rode a cable car far up the side of a mountain. "Salz" means salt and the salt mines have been operating since Roman times. For the tour one dons a suit of white canvas material and rides a tiny train deep into the mine. Although the guide spoke in German, we learned a lot from the displays which illustrate the formation of salt and the way it is mined. At one point we were instructed to sit on a broad wooden rail and slide down to the next stopping point. It was a fast slide and caused a tickle in the tummy. Following our guidebook we ate exclusively in the beer halls and avoided the fancy restaurants. It was good advice. The Sternbrau has a large number of tables in the garden and also several large dining rooms outside. In the garden one goes up to a counter and purchases their beer. Food is available but most people bring their own. We had a beer in the garden and then went inside for dinner. Many menus have English and Italian translations but we can understand a lot of the German menu items and prefer to order from it since it includes the daily specials. That night we had a Greek salad, a potato salad with vegetables and roast chicken accompanied by more beer, of

course.

The next day was cloudy and cool with showers in the afternoon. Nevertheless, we drove into the mountains across the German border to Berchtesgaden, a well-known resort. We followed a well-marked path along a stream for about one hour to Lake Konissee, a large and picturesque mountain lake. A boat took us down the lake for a short visit to a scenic spot with excellent views of the mountains. Unfortunately the day was rather murky. Back in town we had a fish lunch with some good local wine. Many tourists of all nationalities were busy perusing the countless junk shops. That night in Salzburg we ate in the 'keller' (cellar) of a nearby hotel. The accordion music sounds Tyrolean and the food was good.

On Thursday there were more showers but not heavy and we enjoyed good views of several lakes which are clustered within about 40 miles of Salzburg. A very interesting stop was in Halstatt where many neolithic remains of 'Halstatt Man' were discovered a number of years ago. The museum had very clear displays of the archeology which we find very fascinating. That night, at another beer hall, I had spinach gnocchi which are potato/ spinach dumplings. Vickie believes they are too heavy but I found them delicious.

Friday the 7th we drove to Kitzbuhel and had some sun until late in the day. It is primarily known for its skiing and is not too crowded in the summer although the streets were not at all deserted. We rode the cable car up to a peak over 6000 feet in elevation and found several inches of fresh snow on the ground. The temperature was 42 degrees but the sun was warm enough for us to drink our beer on the deck of the restaurant. In Germany and Austria there are restaurants everywhere. Back in Salzburg we enjoyed wiener schnitzels and local wine at yet another keller. Saturday dawned wet and cold. We decided to drive to Munich and the 85 miles on the freeway passed very quickly. We visited the archeological museum and viewed many objects the early German scholars had brought back from Greece. The museum contains many famous masterpieces. Saturday night is, as you know by now, an occasion for loading up. We went back to the Hotel Pitter for dinner and feasted on fettucine with gorgonzola sauce, wiener schnitzel (Jim),

trout (Vickie), large salads, and finally warm apple strudel with ice cream (apfel strudel mit eis).

Fortunately Sunday morning was dry and cool. We carefully followed our plan of running 4 X 5 miles going upstream and downstream on both sides of the river. After each 5 mile segment we stopped for water stored in the trunk of our car. It was a pleasant run along the river often among the trees and always with a good path. So many people walk and ride bicycles in these countries that carefully maintained paths are everywhere. We finished in time to make the breakfast buffet and made a significant dent in the food supplies. After large quantities of fruit juice I constructed a large sandwich of rye bread, salmon spread, and cheese, ~~the new relic~~ by fresh fruit and then breakfast pastries with coffee. In the afternoon we drove a short distance to Hellbrunn, a medieval park with a large barbecue palace. The tour of the pleasure gardens is quite an adventure since they are equipped with concealed fountains that occasionally douse the tourists. The old-time bishops apparently had a sense of humor in addition to endless wealth for their enjoyment. That evening we visited the last beer hall on the list, the Augustiner Keller which occupies the buildings of an ancient priory. Here one usually purchases beer by the liter. It is an amusing sight to see Vickie drinking from a liter stein since it is bigger than her head.

The next morning we set off for Vienna in a heavy downpour and high winds. The weather improved as we covered the 185 miles. After returning the car at the airport we took the bus to the train station and used the hotel reservation service to find a hotel near the park and, incidentally, the historic part of town. After a short taxi ride we arrived at the Hotel Capricorno and a small but comfortable and satisfactory room. Setting out with our map we covered a good portion of the central district which we had visited 10 years ago. For dinner we went to the Gosser Bierklinik, an atmospheric restaurant with a cannonball embedding in the wall; a relic of the 17th century Turkish siege of Vienna. I had the house specialty: wild boar, while Vickie had stuffed peppers. As you can tell, our normal eating habits are ignored when we are travelling. For dessert I had a very rich chocolate cake with custard sauce.

Tuesday mornings we did a short run along the river and into the park.

Actually, it is a canal built to deliver water from the Danube to the city.

In earlier days the river was much closer to town and thus the oldest remains are now near the side of the canal. We started the walking tour by visiting the Roman excavations in the basement of an office building. I am continually amazed at the wide extent of Roman settlements. Nearly every city in Europe is built on top of a Roman town. Vienna was the headquarters of a legion assigned the task of holding the Goths to the opposite bank of the river. There are many interesting medieval sights including a large column erected to commemorate the end of the plague in the 1600s. For lunch we strayed from local cuisine to an Italian restaurant which featured an extensive and very delicious antipasto buffet. There are quite a few Italians in Vienna because of many business interests. That night we attended a performance of the Vienna Hofburg Orchestra which plays selections from Strauss and his contemporaries. We arrived early and sat in the second row. Some music was from light operas (e.g., The Merry Widow) and singers performed as well. It was a very special treat and I kept wishing you could be there too. Afterward we went to another historic restaurant near our hotel and had wiener schnitzel once again.

Wednesday the 12th was showery and cool but improved by noon. We walked a long way to the Belvedere Palace, the summer home of Prince Eugene of Savoy. He was a hero of several wars and was rewarded with great wealth which he spent building magnificent palaces. They have been restored after war damage and now contain art collections and host state occasions such as the opening of the SALT talks. For lunch we visited a seemingly authentic Hungarian restaurant and had a delicious casserole of beef, onions, and peppers. After more walking and sightseeing we returned to the hotel for the essential hot soaks in the tub. In early evening we found the Zwölferkeller, a wine establishment deep inside the remains of a 12th century building. It was filled, mostly with students, since the area is near the university. We enjoyed watching the clientele while sipping the local wine. Next we stopped at a nearby pizzeria and finished the evening with enormous goblets of ice cream.

On Thursday our first stop was at the imperial vault which contains the tombs of the Habsburgs all neatly arrayed to help visitors fix their reigns in mind. After a couple of museums and another Italian lunch we stopped at one of the celebrated Vienna coffee houses for afternoon pastry and coffee. Then we returned to the hotel and dressed for the opera. It was exciting to attend the opera in the beautiful old building. The opera was Italian and sung in Italian. Vickie was very familiar with it and I found it easy to follow with the aid of my program. The evening was dry and warmer and we appreciated the opportunity to stroll back to the hotel through the lively streets.

We returned to London the next day, visited a couple of places and went to an Indian restaurant. On Saturday we returned home; arriving at BWI about 5:30 PM. We drove into Baltimore and ate dinner at Sabatino's, the Italian place we all had lunch in. We nearly finished the giant bowls of spaghetti and these provided the energy for Sunday's 20 miler.

Sorry about the length of this letter. Congratulations if you have finished it! I'm sure there are typos but I don't want to take the time to proofread it.

Love,

*Jim*

CARLSONJ      logged out at 19-SEP-1984 16:26:31:11